

A Kingdom Ambassador

A Life of Selfless Service

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Have you ever looked at a broken, rusted object and seen only trash, while a craftsman looked at the same object and saw a masterpiece in the making? In 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, Paul conveys that when we come to Christ, we undergo a radical transformation. We stop looking at life through a purely human, worldly lens ("according to the flesh") and start seeing through the eyes of the Holy Spirit. Paul is writing the church in Corinth distracted by outward appearances, reputation, and worldly success. Paul calls us to a higher reality: The Gospel changes everything.

God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and entrusted us with the message and ministry of reconciliation. If you are in Christ you are called to be an Ambassador for the Kingdom and Oak Hill Baptist Church is one of the many consulates of God's Kingdom!

I. The Motivation of an Ambassador (v. 11-15)

- a. **A healthy fear of the Lord. (v. 11):** Paul doesn't mean being terrified of God. He means having a profound reverence for God, knowing that we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. This motivates us to live with integrity and to persuade others about the truth of the Gospel.
- b. **The faithful love of Christ that compels us. (v. 14):** We aren't driven by selfish ambition or the need for approval. We are compelled, constrained, and controlled by the love of Christ.
- c. **A found purpose. (v. 15):** The ultimate shift is this: "...that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised."

Ask yourself: "Am I living for my own comfort, or is the love of Christ the compelling factor in my daily decisions?"

II. The Movement of an Ambassador (vv. 16-17) *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."* (v. 17) We move away from the old and become a life creation. This is not just turning over a new leaf; it is becoming a new life.

- a. **The movement away from selfishness. The Old:** The old way of living, the old guilt, the old way of defining people by their sins, status, or appearance—it is gone.
- b. **The movement towards the Savior. The New:** We are given a new identity in Christ, a new perspective, and a new destiny. This transformation is not something we achieve; it is something God does. It is a gift of grace. (Galatians 2:20) *"I have been crucified with*

Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

III. The Ministry of an Ambassador (vv. 18-21) Paul explains that God took the initiative to fix the broken relationship between humanity and Himself.

- a. **See God's action. (v. 19)** In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself, *not counting their trespasses against them*.
- b. **Serve in our assignment. (vv. 18, 20)** Because we have been reconciled, we have been given the "ministry of reconciliation" and the "message of reconciliation".
- c. **Selflessly live as ambassadors. (v. 20)** An ambassador is a representative of a kingdom, authorized to speak on behalf of the King. We do not represent ourselves; we represent Jesus. We are sent to a broken world to say, "Be reconciled to God."

IV. The Magnificent Redemption to Become an Ambassador (v. 21) *"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*

This verse is the heart of the Gospel—the "Great Magnificent Exchange".

- a. **Jesus took our awful sin away.** He was sinless, but he took upon himself our guilt, our rebellion, and our penalty.
- b. **We take His amazing righteousness.** When God looks at us, He no longer sees our sin; He sees the righteousness of Christ.

Will You Go?

We are left here on earth for one reason: to share His message. The gospel is our purpose as a new creation in Christ! If you have been reconciled, you are called to reconcile others. If you have not yet trusted in Christ, the invitation is open: Be reconciled to God today. Let us stop living for ourselves and start living as ambassadors of the new creation, bringing the message of peace to a broken world.